

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 102173

FOR US DEL LOS

FOL TOKYO 6982 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO SEOUL TAIPEI HONG KONG
PEKING CINCPAC HONOLULU HI APR 20, 1978 REPEATED TO YOU QUOTE

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 06982

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PBOR, ENRG, PINS, PINT, CH, KS, JA

SUBJECT: JAPAN-ROK CONTINENTAL SHELF IMPLEMENTING
LEGISLATION

REF: TOKYO 6867

SUMMARY: OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH POLITICIANS OF PROSPECTS
FOR PASSAGE OF SHELF LEGISLATION INDICATES STRONG LDP
DETERMINATION TO PRESS AHEAD WITH REASONABLY GOOD PROSPECT
OF SUCCESS. FINAL OUTCOME SHOWS EVERY SIGN OF REMAINING
MURKY, HOWEVER, RIGHT DOWN TO WIRE STILL WEEKS AWAY.
END SUMMARY

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1. EMBASSY SOUNDINGS OVER PAST TWO DAYS INDICATE THAT LDP
INTENDS TO MAKE ALL-OUT EFFORT TO PASS JAPAN-ROK
CONTINENTAL SHELF IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION AT THIS DIET
SESSION AND IS REASONABLY CONFIDENT OF DOING SO. LDP
UPPER HOUSE MEMBER TARO NAKAYAMA, WHO AS DIRECTOR OF UPPER
HOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE IS LDP WHIP ON ISSUE, TOLD EMBOFFS
APRIL 19 THAT LDP WAS DETERMINED TO SEE LEGISLATION PASSED

IN THIS SESSION. HE CONSIDERED PASSAGE ESSENTIAL, AMONG OTHER REASONS BECAUSE PROMINENT ROK OFFICIAL (UNSPECIFIED) HAD STAKED HIS POLITICAL LIFE ON PASSAGE. NAKAYAMA SAID THAT, ALTHOUGH OPPOSITION PARTIES SHOWED NO GIVE, THERE WOULD ALMOST CERTAINLY BE ADEQUATE TIME TO PROVIDE AS MANY HOURS FOR UPPER HOUSE DELIBERATIONS AS THOSE IN LOWER HOUSE, ROUGH BENCHMARK FOR UPPER HOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE DECISIONS. EVEN IF OPPOSITION REFUSED TO COOPERATE, CONFIDENTIAL

HE SAID HE WAS UNDER STRONG MANDATE FROM PRIME MINISTER AND LDP WOULD TRY TO GET BILL THROUGH ON ITS OWN IF NECESSARY. (IMMEDIATELY AFTER THIS CONVERSATION, INCIDENTALLY, NAKAYAMA LEFT FOR LATE EVENING MEETING WITH FUKUDA.)

2. THESE VIEWS WERE ECHOED IN SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH SEVERAL OTHER LDP DIETMEN, WHO LEFT LITTLE DOUBT AS TO PARTY'S DETERMINATION TO PASS LEGISLATION. UNDERSCORING POINT, LDP DIET POLICY STAFFER TOLD EMBOFF THAT FONMIN SONODA WAS NOW DEEPLY INVOLVED WITH ISSUE DESPITE UPCOMING WASHINGTON VISIT, AND THAT MITI MINISTER KOMOTO HAD GIVEN UP VACATION PLANS TO PERMIT COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS DURING EARLY MAY "GOLDEN WEEK" HOLIDAY PERIOD. STAFFER SAID LDP WAS PULLING ALL STOPS TO ASSURE PASSAGE, HOPEFULLY WITH DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST HELP, BY SCHEDULED MAY 17 DIET CLOSE, BUT LDP WAS ALSO PREPARED TO CONFIDENTIAL

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CONSIDER DIET EXTENSION IF NECESSARY. BOTH THE DIET MEMBERS AND STAFFER DENIED THAT SENKAKUS INCIDENT WOULD AFFECT UPPER HOUSE CONSIDERATION OF SHELF LEGISLATION.

3. ON OPPOSITION SIDE, NEW LIBERAL CLUB MEMBER OF UPPER HOUSE COMMERCE COMMITTEE, WHICH WILL DELIBERATE BILL, DOUBTED THERE WOULD BE SUFFICIENT DELIBERATION TIME BEFORE SCHEDULED DIET END, BUT THOUGHT LEGISLATION WOULD PASS IF DIET WAS EXTENDED. CLEAN GOVERNMENT PARTY UPPER HOUSE MEMBER SAID PROSPECTS FOR BILL WERE UNCLEAR, WITH MUCH DEPENDING ON INTENSITY OF SOCIALIST/COMMUNIST RESISTANCE. AT THIS STAGE HIS PARTY INTENDED SIMPLY TO REGISTER ITS OPPOSITION.

4. COMMENT: SHELF LEGISLATION HAS ALL EARMARKS OF AN ISSUE WHICH WILL BE BATTLED DOWN TO WIRE--STILL NEARLY A MONTH AWAY--WITH OUTCOME UNCERTAIN. OVER NEXT FEW WEEKS UPPER HOUSE STEERING COMMITTEE WILL DO ITS HORSE TRADING ON DELIBERATION SCHEDULE, SENTIMENT ON DIET EXTENSION WILL CRYSTALIZE, AND IMPACT OF EXTERNAL INFLUENCES SUCH AS SENKAKUS INCIDENT AND ROK LOBBYING WILL BE ABSORBED. AT THIS POINT, PROSPECTS FOR PASSAGE WITHOUT DIET

EXTENSION APPEAR TO BE PROBLEMATIC, WITH EXTENSION
REASONABLY GOOD. MANSFIELD UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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